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Committee for Programme and Coordination
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Agenda item 7
Adoption of the report of the Committee on its fifty-sixth session

Draft report

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Addendum

Proposed strategic framework for the period 2018-2019
(*Item 3 (b) (ii)*)

Programme 23
Humanitarian assistance

1. At its 9th meeting, on 3 June 2016, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered programme 23, Humanitarian assistance, of the proposed strategic framework for the period 2018-2019 (A/71/6 (Prog. 23)). The Committee also had before it a note by the Secretariat on the review of the biennial programme plan, by sectoral, functional and regional bodies (E/AC.51/2016/CRP.1/Rev.1).

2. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the programme and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the programme.

Discussion

3. Views were expressed in support and appreciation of the programme and the profoundly important and invaluable work carried out by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and its partners, in the face of challenging circumstances. It was underscored that it was necessary, however, to continue to build on the success achieved and to focus more on the population requiring humanitarian assistance. It was emphasized that timeliness in humanitarian response was of critical importance.

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4. Information was sought on how the office-wide functional review, expected to be published in the third quarter of 2016, was going to impact the strategic framework of the programme.

5. Reference was made to the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the triennial review of the implementation of recommendations on the programme evaluation of the Office (E/AC.51/2016/3), which had been discussed earlier. The Office was commended for its implementation of the recommendations.

6. Several delegations stressed that the strategic framework and all activities carried out by the Office must be in accordance with the framework of legislative mandates, in particular General Assembly resolution 46/182, and the agreed nomenclature. In that regard, it was pointed out that the use of the nomenclature "natural disasters" was too restrictive and not in line with agreed language. It appeared to exclude other types of disasters that were not necessarily natural, but attributable to other causes, man-made, technical and others. It was suggested that "crisis management" should be replaced by "humanitarian emergency management".

7. Concerns were expressed about the methodological aspects of the proposed strategic framework. In particular, it was indicated that the proposed framework needed to follow the principle of results-based management and that indicators of achievement should have focused more on the impact and outcome of the Office's work. The view was expressed that some of the existing indicators were clear and measurable and did not need to be revised, in particular when comparison of performance from one period to another was necessary. Other indicators, however, needed refinement. In particular, clarification was sought on how the use of "percentage" could be a useful indicator of achievement, given that it did not provide any information on a trend. It was emphasized that any changes to the strategic framework should be based on legislative mandates and should not be detrimental to the substance of the programme.

8. Regarding subprogramme 1, Policy and analysis, it was pointed out that, with regard to expected accomplishment (a), the engagement of other partners was certainly useful but should not be an end in itself. On expected accomplishment (c), clarification was sought on its origin and mandate, and the view was expressed that it needed to be properly linked to legislative mandates. In particular, it was stressed that the Office did not have a mandate related to the "protection of civilians", the main responsibility of which lied with national Governments and the Security Council.

9. On the strategy of subprogramme 1, in particular the plan to increase the number of humanitarian policy priorities, as discussed in the report of the Secretary-General on strengthening coordination and by Member States in the annual Economic and Social Council and General Assembly humanitarian resolution negotiations, in order to increase the likelihood of such priorities being adopted as resolutions, it was stressed that a report of the Secretary-General did not constitute a mandate but was used only as a basis for discussion.

10. On subprogramme 2, Coordination of humanitarian action and emergency response, clarification was sought on the change made to the title of subprogramme 2 in the Spanish version.

11. Regarding subprogramme 3, Natural disaster risk reduction, it was noted that the subprogramme had been significantly revised and that it needed to be fully based on the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030. It was pointed out that some of the proposals would likely have budget implications. It was also pointed out that clarity was needed on the indicator of achievement (a) (i), given that it also related to disaster risk reduction strategies that confronted the root causes of social vulnerability, in particular taking into consideration that the question of the root causes of social vulnerability were not included in the Sendai Framework. Caution was expressed at the discussion of root causes, given that it quickly led to discussion of areas beyond the humanitarian mandate.

12. Regarding subprogramme 4, the usefulness of indicator of achievement (b) was questioned with the argument that all countries used some type of "disaster response and preparedness tools".

Conclusions and recommendations

13. **The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of programme 23, Humanitarian assistance, of the proposed strategic framework for the period 2018-2019, subject to the following modifications:**

Overall orientation

Paragraph 23.1

Replace paragraph 23.1 with the following:

The overall purpose of the programme is to ensure the timely, coherent, coordinated and principled response of the international community to disasters and emergencies and to facilitate the transition from emergency relief to rehabilitation and sustainable development. The legislative authority and mandate for the programme are derived from General Assembly resolution 46/182, in which the Assembly set out the guiding principles of humanitarian response and which reinforced earlier decisions and resolutions adopted by the Assembly and by the Economic and Social Council concerning humanitarian assistance and the leadership role of the Secretary-General in responding to natural disasters and other humanitarian emergencies. This mandate has been confirmed and broadened through the normative developments of resolution 46/182 over the past 20 years.

Paragraph 23.2

At the end of the third sentence, insert "in compliance with the mandates emanating from the Sendai Declaration and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030.".

16-10920

Subprogramme 1
Policy and analysis

Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat

Replace expected accomplishment (a) with "Decisions of Inter-Agency Standing Committee members and other partners are informed by humanitarian policy analysis and dialogue".

Replace expected accomplishment (c) with "Improved capacity of United Nations coordinators for the protection of civilians".

Indicators of achievement

Replace indicator of achievement (a) (ii) with "Increased number of recommendations arising from humanitarian policy and programmatic studies and reports implemented".

Replace indicator of achievement (b) with "Increased percentage of inter-agency evaluation recommendations implemented by humanitarian agencies".

Replace indicator of achievement (c) with "Number of resident coordinators and humanitarian coordinators trained in the application of guidelines for the protection of civilians".

Strategy

Paragraph 23.6

In the second sentence, delete "that Member States discuss in the annual Economic and Social Council and General Assembly humanitarian resolution negotiations, in order to increase the likelihood of such priorities being adopted as resolutions".

Subprogramme 2
Coordination of humanitarian action and emergency response

Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat

In expected accomplishment (d), insert "relevant" before "United Nations".

Indicators of achievement

Replace indicator of achievement (c) with "Increased percentage of project proposals under the rapid response window approved by the Emergency Relief Coordinator within three working days of their final submission".

Replace indicator of achievement (d) with "Increased percentage of new or escalating emergencies requiring international assistance in which coordination staff is deployed within seven days".

Strategy

Paragraph 23.9

In the second sentence replace "grooming" with "training".

At the end of the paragraph, delete ", as appropriate".

Subprogramme 3
Natural disaster risk reduction

Indicators of achievement

In indicator of achievement (a) (i), delete ", including those that confront the root causes of social vulnerability".

In indicator of achievement (c), add "and projects" after "programmes".

Strategy

Paragraph 23.16

Replace paragraph 23.16 with "The International Strategy for Disaster Reduction will strive to ensure full implementation of Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, which was adopted at the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, in 2015, and endorsed by the General Assembly in resolution 69/283.".

Paragraph 23.17

Delete the first sentence.

Paragraph 23.18

Replace the first sentence with "The International Strategy for Disaster Reduction will support the implementation, follow-up and review of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, as prescribed in resolution 69/283.".

Subprogramme 4
Emergency support services

Indicators of achievement

Replace indicator of achievement (a) with the following:

(i) International assistance is provided to the affected country within 48 hours of its request for international assistance

(ii) Percentage of new or escalating emergencies in which coordination staff is deployed within seven days

Replace indicator of achievement (b) with "Total number of interoperable international humanitarian response tools and services adapted".

Subprogramme 5
Humanitarian emergency information and advocacy

Objective of the Organization

Replace the objective of the Organization with "To ensure effective advocacy of humanitarian principles and knowledge-sharing, serving populations affected by disasters and emergencies".

Strategy

Paragraph 23.25

In the first sentence, replace "humanitarian crises" with "humanitarian crises and emergencies".